

IOWA BOARD OF NURSING

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In RE: Petition for	)	Declaratory Ruling No. 85
Declaratory Ruling Filed By:	)	
Lisa Bakerink	)	RN Delegation to Nonlicensed
Joan Klyn, RN	)	Persons, the Care of a Well-
April 23, 1996	)	established Tracheostomy Tube
	)	for a Resident Living in an
	)	ICF/MR or RCF/MR

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A petition for declaratory ruling was filed with the Iowa Board of Nursing by Lisa Bakerink, Regional Team Leader and Joan Klyn, RN, Christian Opportunity Center, on April 23, 1996.

The Board is authorized to issue declaratory rulings "as to the applicability of any statutory provision, rule, or other written statement of law or policy, decision, or order of the agency" pursuant to Iowa Code § 17A.9 (1995). See also 655 IAC 9.

The board's interpretation of the question is

May a registered nurse employed by Christian Opportunity Center delegate to nonlicensed personnel, the tasks related to the care of a well-established tracheostomy in either an IFC/MR or an RCF/MR?

Certain facts leading to this request are set forth in declaratory ruling number 66 in which the board allowed a registered nurse to delegate to nonlicensed personnel the tasks of suctioning the tracheostomy, removing the inner cannula, washing it with soap and water, rinsing it, and reinserting it.

Facts leading to this request are as follows:

Christian Opportunity Center (COC) is a twenty-six-year-old, private, not-for-profit agency providing family and community-based services to individuals with developmental disabilities. The agency was founded by parents of children with disabilities as a school program. COC has since transitioned to adult services with the intention of establishing services that provide necessary supports, that enable these adults to remain living in the least restrictive setting possible.

COC's ICFs/MRs are staffed by direct training staff, many of whom are medication aides. The RCFs/MRs are staffed by direct training staff, many of whom are medication managers. COC currently has one full-time and one part-time RN on staff to conduct training for medication staff and to provide ongoing health assessments and competency checks. Nurses are on call for necessary nursing functions.

Recently a thirty-three-year-old woman, who has always lived with her parents in their home, applied for admission to both the ICF/MR and RCF/MR facilities. Her tracheostomy was performed five and one-half years ago in response to an acute respiratory infection. She is not totally tracheostomy dependent for breathing, but attempts at its removal in the past have not been successful. The woman does not meet qualifications for admission to COC due to her nursing need for tracheostomy care. Currently

her family provides for all of her needs, including the required tracheostomy care. The tracheostomy care consists of removal and cleaning of the inner cannula, washing it, replacing it, saline instillation, and applying a clean dressing. There has been no need for suctioning of the tracheostomy during the last five and one-half years. She attends a community workshop (vocational program) and commutes by bus to the workshop. She has not encountered problems in either of these settings.

The prospective resident's parents are requesting residential services so she can live and work in an environment which will allow her educational, vocational, and social opportunities with her own age peer group. If the petition were denied, she would probably have to be placed in a geriatric facility which would be inappropriate for her age and would deny her educational, social, and vocational opportunities. The parents of the prospective resident concur with this request.

Rationale:

The Iowa Board of Nursing considers tracheostomy care to be a nursing function. However, due to the facts and circumstances in this case, an RN employed by COC may delegate to nonlicensed personnel, the tracheostomy care of a thirty-three-year-old female which includes removal and cleaning of the inner cannula, washing it, replacing it, saline instillation, and applying a

clean dressing provided that:

1. There is a registered nurse on call twenty-four hours per day seven days per week;
2. The registered nurse provides inservice education for the nonlicensed personnel, the nurse observes the successful demonstration of all of the tasks by the nonlicensed personnel, documentation thereof is contained in the personnel file of the nonlicensed personnel;
3. The registered nurse observes at least one performance of the task by each nonlicensed personnel on a quarterly basis to assess skills;
4. The registered nurse provides annual review of procedures being delegated to nonlicensed personnel, documentation thereof is contained in the personnel file of the nonlicensed personnel;
5. The institution has a written policy identifying that the registered nurse may delegate the tasks only under the ascribed conditions; and
6. The procedure has been prescribed by the physician by a written order.

The registered nurse shall retain accountability for actions that are delegated.

*Nancy E. Knutstrom*

Nancy E. Knutstrom, R.N., M.S., Ed.  
Chairperson  
Iowa Board of Nursing

June 6, 1996

Date

*Lorinda K. Inman*

Lorinda K. Inman, R.N., M.S.N.  
Executive Director  
Iowa Board of Nursing

June 6, 1996

Date